

What is claimed is:

1. A contents copying management system configured by connecting a contents copying apparatus and a copying management device by way of a network, said contents copying apparatus comprising:

medium identifying information acquiring means for acquiring medium identifying information specific to and characterizing a recorded-contents-carrying original recording medium;

apparatus identifying information acquiring means for acquiring apparatus identifying information specific to and indicating said contents copying apparatus itself;

copying-related combination information transmitting means for transmitting said medium identifying information and said apparatus identifying information to said copying management device as copying-related combination information at the time of copying said contents;

receiving means for receiving copying authorizing information generated by said copying management device on the basis of said copying-related combination information at the time of accessing said copying management device; and

control means for controlling the operation of copying said contents in response to said copying authorizing information;

said copying management device comprising:

memory means for registering and storing said copying-related combination information received from said contents copying apparatus

in advance;

copying authorizing information generating means for comparing said copying-related combination information received at the time of access by said contents copying apparatus with said copying-related combination information registered in said memory means in advance, judging agreement or disagreement of said combinations of medium identifying information and apparatus identifying information, generating copying authorizing information for authorizing an operation of copying the contents in response to agreement of said combinations but generating copying non-authorizing information for not authorizing any operation of copying the contents in response to disagreement of said combinations; and

copying authorizing information transmitting means for transmitting said copying authorizing information to said contents copying apparatus.

2. A system according to claim 1, wherein

said control means controls reproduction of said copied contents according to said copying authorizing information.

3. A system according to claim 1, wherein

said medium identifying information is dispersion of the printing surface of said recorded-contents-carrying original recording

medium produced at the time of printing, dispersion information of the signals on the recording surface of said recorded-contents-carrying original recording medium, the signals recorded on the recording surface or a combination of any of them.

4. A system according to claim 1, wherein

said control means controls copying of said contents according to said copying authorizing information and displays a predetermined warning image on display means when copying is not authorized according to said copying authorizing information.

5. A system according to claim 1, wherein

said memory means registers said medium identifying information according to the title of said contents on a title by title basis when registering and storing in advance said copying-related combination information received from said contents copying apparatus and

said copying authorizing information generating means selects said medium identifying information to be compared according to said title when it compares said copying-related combination information received at the time of said access of said contents copying apparatus with said copying-related combination information registered in advance in said memory means.

6. A system according to claim 1, wherein

said control means generates the contents to be copied, convoluting said medium identifying information and said apparatus identifying information into said contents, when copying said contents and controls reproduction of said copied contents by taking out the medium identifying information and the apparatus identifying information from said copied contents, transmitting the combined information to said copying management device by means of said copying-related combination information transmitting means and receiving said copying authorizing information generated by said copying management device on the basis of the combination of the medium identifying information and apparatus identifying information by the receiving means when reproducing said copied contents.

7. A system according to claim 1, wherein

said control means generates the contents to be copied, convoluting said medium identifying information and said apparatus identifying information into said contents and additionally stores the medium identifying information and the apparatus identifying information in said recording/reproducing apparatus when carrying out an operation of copying said contents and it confirms if said copied contents are authorized to be copied according to the copying authorizing information obtained by taking out the medium identifying

information and the apparatus identifying information, transmitting the combined information to said copying management device by means of said copying-related combination information transmitting means and receiving said copying authorizing information generated by said copying management device on the basis of the combination of the medium identifying information and apparatus identifying information by the receiving means when the copied contents are not reproduced.

8. A system according to claim 1, wherein

said control means encodes the contents, using said apparatus identifying information as key, when carrying out an operation of copying said contents.

9. A copying management device comprising:

copying-related combination information receiving means for receiving medium identifying information specific to and characterizing a recorded-contents-carrying original recording medium and apparatus identifying information specific to and indicating a contents copying apparatus itself from said contents copying apparatus as copying-related combination information at the time of copying said contents by way of a network;

memory means for registering and storing said copying-related combination information received from said contents copying apparatus

in advance;

copying authorizing information generating means for comparing said copying-related combination information received at the time of access by said contents copying apparatus with said copying-related combination information registered in said memory means in advance, determining agreement or disagreement of said combinations of medium identifying information and apparatus identifying information, generating copying authorizing information for authorizing an operation of copying the contents in response to agreement of said combinations but generating copying non-authorizing information for not authorizing any operation of copying the contents in response to disagreement of said combinations; and

copying authorizing information transmitting means for transmitting said copying authorizing information to said contents copying apparatus, wherein

said copying management device controlling copying of said contents by said contents copying apparatus from said recorded-contents-carrying original recording medium according to said copying authorizing information with respect to each recorded-contents-carrying original recording medium.

10. A copying management method comprising:

a copying-related combination information receiving step of

receiving medium identifying information specific to and characterizing a recorded-contents-carrying original recording medium and apparatus identifying information specific to and indicating a contents copying apparatus itself from said contents copying apparatus as copying-related combination information at the time of copying said contents by way of a network;

a storing step of registering and storing said copying-related combination information received from said contents copying apparatus in advance;

a copying authorizing information generating step of comparing said copying-related combination information received at the time of access by said contents copying apparatus with said copying-related combination information registered in said memory step in advance, determining agreement or disagreement of said combinations of medium identifying information and apparatus identifying information, generating copying authorizing information for authorizing an operation of copying the contents in response to agreement of said combinations but generating copying non-authorizing information for not authorizing any operation of copying the contents in response to disagreement of said combinations; and

a copying authorizing information transmitting step of transmitting said copying authorizing information to said contents copying apparatus, wherein

said copying management method controlling copying of said contents by said contents copying apparatus from said recorded-contents-carrying original recording medium according to said copying authorizing information with respect to each recorded-contents-carrying original recording medium.

11. A contents copying apparatus comprising:

medium identifying information acquiring means for acquiring medium identifying information specific to and characterizing a recorded-contents-carrying original recording medium;

apparatus identifying information acquiring means for acquiring apparatus identifying information specific to and indicating said contents copying apparatus itself;

copying-related combination information transmitting means for transmitting said medium identifying information and said apparatus identifying information to a copying management device connected to it by way of a network as copying-related combination information at the time of copying said contents;

receiving means for receiving copying authorizing information generated after registration of said copying-related combination information by said copying management device by comparing said copying-related combination information transmitted at the time of a new access to said copying management device with said copying-related



combination information registered in advance, and authorizing an operation of copying the contents in response to agreement of said combinations of medium identifying information and apparatus identifying information but not authorizing any operation of copying the contents in response to disagreement of said combinations from said copying management device; and

control means for controlling the operation of copying according to said copying authorizing information.

12. A contents copying method comprising:

a medium identifying information acquiring step of acquiring medium identifying information specific to and characterizing a recorded-contents-carrying original recording medium;

an apparatus identifying information acquiring step of acquiring apparatus identifying information specific to and indicating said contents copying apparatus itself;

a copying-related combination information transmitting step of transmitting said medium identifying information and said apparatus identifying information to a copying management device connected to it by way of a network as copying-related combination information at the time of copying said contents;

a receiving step of receiving copying authorizing information generated after registration of said copying-related combination

information by said copying management device by comparing said copying-related combination information transmitted at the time of a new access to said copying management device with said copying-related combination information registered in advance, and authorizing an operation of copying the contents in response to agreement of said combinations of medium identifying information and apparatus identifying information but not authorizing any operation of copying the contents in response to disagreement of said combinations from said copying management device; and

a control step of controlling the operation of copying said contents according to said copying authorizing information.